THE STATUS OF PSEUDOHOMALOMENA PASTOENSIS

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Pseudohomalomena pastoensis was described by A. D. Hawkes as a new genus and new species of the Araceae (Madroño 11:146-149. 1951). The author placed it in the subfamily Philodendroideae, tribe Philodendreae, subtribe Homalomeninae, with the statement that because of "its widely-spreading, almost flattened, large spathe" it "is virtually unique in the subtribe."

A comparison of the type specimen (*Espinosa 2866,* Pasto, "Ecuador," UC 905798) with a photograph of the type specimen of *Zantedeschia* (*Calla*) *aethiopica* (No. 1081–1 in the Herbarium of the Linnean Society of London) indicates that the two are conspecific. Engler (1915) placed the genus *Zantedeschia* in the tribe Zantedeschieae of the subfamily Philodendroideae.

In the description of *Pseudohomalomena pastoensis* certain statements are made concerning the habit of the plant that are not supported either by an examination of the specimen or by the collector's notes. It is described as "terrestrial" and "apparently stemless"; however, with the meagre material available one could as well assume that it was epiphytic and scandent. Likewise, the lamina is described as hastate with a caudate apex; actually the lamina of the type specimen is sagittate with a cuspidate apex.

The specimen appears to have the petiole and peduncle cut short; yet the measurements of the remaining parts were taken without qualification as to the probable missing parts. It is indicated in the Latin generic diagnosis that the petiole is lightly vaginate, but this statement could not be derived from the cited specimen, as only a small part of the upper portion remains on the specimen and close observation reveals no vagination of any degree on this part. The presence of vagination is of importance inasmuch as the subtribe Homalomeninae, in which the author placed *Pseudohomalomena,* is defined by Engler and Krause (1912, p. 24) as having a vaginate petiole.

In translating from the collector's notes, an error has been made concerning the color of the spathe. "Color amarillo muy ckaro [claro], casi blanco" is translated as "bright yellow, almost white." More properly the phrase should be translated as color yellow, very light, almost white. This is in accordance with the spathe coloration that occurs in *Zantedeschia aethiopica* for the spathe often becomes cream color in age.

The type locality, Pasto, was given in the article as being in Ecuador; although it is close to the border of that country, it is within Colombia. The collector's notes clearly indicate that the plant was not native to Pasto for they read, "cultivado o semiespontanea," but this fact is not mentioned in the article. There are numerous instances of localities where this

plant has escaped from cultivation, for example: in Marin County, California (Howell, 1949, p. 97) and in Costa Rica (Standley, 1937, p. 146).

It is, therefore, concluded from this study that *Pseudohomalomena pastoensis* A. D. Hawkes is a synonym of *Zantedeschia aethiopica* (L.) Spreng., the common White Calla Lily, a native of South Africa.

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Literature Cited

Engler, A. 1915. Araceae-Philodendroideae-Anubiadeae, Aglaonemateae, Dieffenbachieae, Zantedeschieae, Typhonodoreae, Peltandreae. Das Pflanzenreich 64: (IV. 23. Dc) 1–78. Leipzig.

Engler, A. and K. Krause. 1912. Araceae-Philodendroideae-Philodendreae. Homalomeninae und Schismatoglottidinae. Das Pflanzenreich 55: (IV. 23, Da) 1–134. Leipzig.

Howell, J. T. 1949. Marin Flora. Berkeley.

Standley, P. C. 1937. Flora of Costa Rica. Publ. Field Mus. Nat. Hist. Bot. 391, Bot. Ser. 18:1–398.

REVIEW

How to Know the Grasses. By Richard W. Pohl. 192 pp., 1954. Wm. C. Brown Company, Dubuque, Iowa. Spiral binding, $2.00; cloth binding, $2.75.

This most recent addition to the "Pictured-Key Nature Series" treats 293 of "... the commonest and most important species of American grasses — those that the beginner is most apt to meet, and those of importance in farming, gardening, weed control, range and pasture management. In addition to those keyed and illustrated, 91 others are mentioned in connection with closely related species, and their distinguishing features are pointed out."

The book has a most helpful introductory section which points out (in a compact, illustrated key) the differences between the Juncaceae, Gramineae, and Cyperaceae and which also functions as an illustrated glossary for the more common terms the student must know to begin a study of the grasses. This introductory section is made more complete by the inclusion of a brief bibliography of useful books on grasses, several pages of directions for the collection and study of these plants, and a well illustrated key to the tribes of this family.

The pictured keys to the species seem to be workable and well constructed. However, the somewhat arbitrary selection of species necessitated by the geographic scope of the book may sometimes limit accurate field use of the book for identification to the species level.

For example: *Andropogon elliottii,* found in southern Illinois, would key to *A. virginicus;* and a student, not knowing the frequency of occurrence of *A. elliottii* and possibly not heeding the author's note that "about fourteen other similar species or varieties occur in the southeastern states," might assume his work to be completed correctly. For the beginning student, however, such a mistake would probably be of no great consequence.

The many grasses which are "common locally" throughout the United States could obviously not be included in this beginner's book, and for this reason its greatest value, other than the text value of the introduction, will be in supervised field work and in class use to key out selected grasses. Within this scope, its content, size, and price should make it a popular member of the series and useful in a wide geographical area.—C. Ritchie Bell, Department of Botany, University of Illinois, Urbana.